



*Maryland Association of*  
**COUNTIES**

*Growth in Maryland:*  
*County Government Planners*  
*Survey on Smart Growth*

Compiled by the  
Maryland Association of Counties  
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# INTRODUCTION

- MACo undertook a comprehensive survey of its county planners on growth, Smart Growth, and GIS capabilities
- The survey questions were formulated by county planners, with input from MDP and the National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education.
- The 36-question survey was conducted from February to March of 2008. All 23 counties plus Baltimore City responded.
- The survey included a mix of closed and open-ended questions to allow for a variety of responses.
- The survey results are summarized in this

## **Abbreviations used in the survey:**

• APFO	Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance
• BRAC	Base Realignment and Closure
• GIS	Geographic Information System
• LDA	Limited Development Area
• MACo	Maryland Association of Counties
• MDE	Maryland Department of the Environment
• MDP	Maryland Department of Planning
• MML	Maryland Municipal League
• MPDU	Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit
• MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
• NACo	National Association of Counties
• PDR	Purchase of Development Rights
• PFA	Priority Funding Area
• PUD	Planned Unit Development
• TDR	Transfer of Development Rights
• TIF	Tax Increment Financing
• TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
• URDL	Urban-Rural Demarcation Line

COUNTY GROWTH TRENDS  
AND PUBLIC ATTITUDES  
TOWARD GROWTH AND  
SMART GROWTH

**Question #1: Indicate how you believe development over the last 10 years has affected your jurisdiction’s “quality of life”. (Check one)**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Seriously Degraded	0.0%	0
Modestly Degraded	37.5%	9
Modestly Improved	41.7%	10
Seriously Improved	4.2%	1
No Effect	16.7%	4
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>24</b>

## **Additional Comments to Question #1 (1 of 2)**

- Traffic is worse, and environmental quality has deteriorated slightly, but growth controls have slowed growth to 1% annually. School quality is very good and the crime rate is slow.
- Some new homes have been built in planned subdivisions.
- We had a period of rapid growth that has had obvious impacts on schools and roads, with some impact from out-of-state commuters passing through the county. Efforts have been made to address matters, but funding is not there even with developer help as they cannot pay for existing inadequacies.
- Reduced unemployment, improved wages and increased median household incomes. Enhanced tax base has resulted in increased public services.
- Growth has brought new investment and opportunities.
- My county has been in need of more residential developments in which homes are built rather than just lots for sale. The County has also needed more commercial development for jobs and the tax base.
- Water quality/quantity impacts; loss of agricultural land; traffic congestion; and cost of governance, including emergency services are all key growth factors.
- Development has neither improved or degraded the quality of life in my county over the past 10 years. Development has created positive economic benefits for the county but has also negatively affected our public facilities – especially roads, schools, and water. Growth is responsible for more traffic and poorly designed, standard cookie-cutter cul-de-sac subdivisions that lack a sense of community and place.
- My county has seen diversity of job and housing opportunities and reinvestment in older and existing neighborhoods.
- While some development has occurred in the county and its municipalities, traffic congestion and other side effects of growth has not become annoying while the redevelopment and revitalization of certain areas in the counties and towns have had a positive effect on the overall quality of life.
- Growth has led to increased consumer choices and upgraded infrastructure.
- My county has benefited from modest growth which has supported a stable tax base, enabling the county to provide high quality public services.
- I believe there are more employment opportunities, entertainment venues, and quality housing being constructed in my county.

## Additional Comments to Question #1 (2 of 2)

- Major development activity has enhanced our economic climate. The BRAC process will be a significant growth driver. However, development has also negatively impacted our infrastructure, environmental resources, and neighborhood preservation.
- There is no one answer that relates to the county as a whole – in some areas it has improved while in other areas it has degraded (*i.e.*, inadequate schools, congested roads, strains on emergency medical services, lack of available park/recreation areas, and lack of funding).
- The past 10 years of growth has increased traffic and reduced green space and adversely impacted natural, agricultural, and historic resources. However, the County has been able to maintain the high quality of schools and other services. On the positive side, the development pattern is shifting towards nodes with more compact, higher density mixed use that can potentially support more extensive transit service.
- There is more than one answer – in some areas development has improved the quality of life while in other areas it has degraded it.
- My county has expanded the range of housing options, including luxury townhouses, single-family homes, and condominiums, while preserving green infrastructure.
- Growth impacts were worse, but have gotten better because of county TDR regulations.
- Growth has not caused a noticeable effect as of yet on the county's quality of life.
- Growth has prompted my jurisdiction to move forward on redevelopment of our urban area, including our waterfront and older residential communities.
- My county has seen an increase in traffic congestion at certain key road intersections.



**Question #2: What level of growth pressure has your jurisdiction experienced in the last 10 years relative to your understanding of past long-term trends in your jurisdiction? (Check one)**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Much Lower	0.0%	0
Lower	8.3%	2
About the Same	33.3%	8
Higher	50.0%	12
Much Higher	8.3%	2
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>24</b>

**Question #3: What is your expectation for future growth pressure in your jurisdiction relative to your understanding of past long-term trends in your jurisdiction? (Check one)**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Much Lower	0.0%	0
Lower	12.5%	3
About the Same	25.0%	6
Higher	62.5%	15
Much Higher	0.0%	0
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>24</b>

**Question #4: What is the local POLITICAL attitude towards growth? (Check one)**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Very negative	0.0%	0
Somewhat negative	12.5%	3
Divided	41.7%	10
Somewhat positive	25.0%	6
Very positive	20.8%	5
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>24</b>

## **Additional Comments to Question #4**

- My Board of County Commissioners has effectively controlled the rate of growth through zoning density cuts, a strong land preservation program, and APFOs. They are not opposed to growth, just rapid growth.
- Economic Growth is supported and some growth is seen as necessary, but the recent increase in growth over the historical rate was hard to explain to the public.
- The county's economic situation is a determining factor.
- There is little organized activity either for or against growth. County leaders have some satisfaction with apparent direction of new comprehensive plan, although zoning and other land use controls have not yet been implemented.
- Our politicians are for managed growth in the designated areas but are concerned about the increasing interest in annexation.
- Our politicians recognize that our county is well located, with a strong market demand that obliges us to accommodate a reasonable amount of development. Economic development is well-supported. There is concern about managing growth to maintain a high quality of life.

**Question #5: What is the local CITIZEN attitude towards growth?**  
**(Check one)**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Very negative	0.0%	0
Somewhat negative	25.0%	6
Divided	66.7%	16
Somewhat positive	8.3%	2
Very positive	0.0%	0
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>24</b>

## Additional Comments to Question #5

- Our citizens generally support growth but there is a very vocal and increasing opposition to growth due to the impact of infrastructure and the environment. One citizen group wants additional infrastructure and environmental improvements but was new development to pay for it all.
- Long time residents are generally supportive of growth while second homeowners and new-comers to the county are somewhat negative.
- My county is still basically a rural county. Our citizens would like to see more opportunities and closer shopping. Our farmers do not really want to change the county to any great degree but want to retain their option to sell to a developer.
- Citizens that get involved are typically negative about new growth
- Citizens and local officials are quite confused by “smart growth”. I suspect at this point it is just a buzzword to most. Benefits to citizens, jurisdictions, and developers needs to be instilled. A serious marketing campaign is needed – an occasional brochure doesn’t do it.
- Citizen attitude is somewhat similar to the political attitude towards growth.
- Our county is very diverse with some communities desiring growth and other wanting less growth.
- The majority of our citizenry is indifferent to growth – they are happy with their neighborhood, schools, and services. A small, but vocal number feels strongly positive (business community) or negative (environmental advocates or those impacted by nearby development).

**Question #6: What is the local POLITICAL attitude towards Smart Growth? (Check one)**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Very negative	4.2%	1
Somewhat negative	8.3%	2
Divided	29.2%	7
Somewhat positive	45.8%	11
Very positive	12.5%	3
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>24</b>

## Additional Comments to Question #6

- Our politicians believe in controlling growth, but are divided on the State's smart growth policies.
- Many of our politicians see the benefits and theory behind Smart Growth but I feel that it lacks political support.
- The areas qualifying as PFAs in my county are relatively small due to limited availability of public water and sewer and the density standard required for existing and planned communities to qualify as a PFA. This PFA criteria has resulted in a somewhat negative political attitude towards Smart Growth in my county.
- Smart Growth has come to mean PFAs, which do not work in my county because it is unable to meet State criteria for designation of many growth areas.
- Conflicts between State agencies (*i.e.*, MDP and MDE) make implementation difficult and problematic.
- State conflicts about implementing Smart Growth makes implementation difficult – ignorance abounds.
- In the abstract, it is positive. However, individual policies or actions may not be as positive.
- Depends on who and how Smart Growth is defined. The implementation of Smart Growth is what people are negative about, not the concepts.
- Conceptually our politicians support Smart Growth tenets, but are cautious in light of constituent resistance to higher density infill in the PFA.
- Our politicians want growth to go in the towns.
- The county's concept of Smart Growth does not match up to the State's concept.



**Question #7: What is the local CITIZEN attitude towards Smart Growth? (Check one)**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Very negative	4.2%	1
Somewhat negative	4.2%	1
Divided	54.2%	13
Somewhat positive	37.5%	9
Very positive	0.0%	0
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>24</b>

## Additional Comments to Question #7

- Our citizens like the concept of Smart Growth and hope that it will protect the environment and improve traffic.
- The public gives Smart Growth a lot of lip service, but does not support implementing it. They like the concept but not the actions required to implement the concept. The public has opposed rezoning requests that increase density – we have not received public support for any rezoning in the last few years that even came close to 3.5 units per acre even in the growth areas. The reason is because it will adversely impact schools and increase traffic.
- People understand that towns/urban areas should grow, but there has not been enough development in the county to raise concerns. Individual concerns do arise when citizens believe Smart Growth policy is interfering with property rights.
- Citizen perception of Smart Growth mostly due to a local of public understanding of what Smart Growth is.
- Our citizens like Smart Growth in principle until it comes to our county. We have positive comments on small scale developments and revitalization of existing areas. However, the reaction to a recent charrette demonstrates the concern of the community – both citizens and politicians – to any large scale growth, no matter how well located and designed. The reaction was positive to the process but negative to the density and scale of the project. We seem to have less concern about “conservation subdivisions” in areas surrounding towns.
- In the abstract, it is positive. However, individual policies or actions may not be as positive. More education of the general public is needed.
- Some citizens have expressed support for Smart Growth but do not support the identified “growth areas” which translates as being negative towards Smart Growth.
- Citizen attitude depends on how Smart Growth is defined. The implementation of Smart Growth is what people are negative about, not the concepts.
- While citizens do not exactly favor “dumb growth”, they prefer Smart Growth (higher density infill in the PFAs) when it is in someone else’s backyard.
- The average citizen does not know what Smart Growth is.

# COUNTY GROWTH MANAGEMENT AND REGIONAL PLANNING

**Question #8: What are your jurisdiction's most significant growth management challenges? (Rank all relevant items - #1 being greatest challenge to #6 being the least)**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>#1</b>	<b>#2</b>	<b>#3</b>	<b>#4</b>	<b>#5</b>	<b>#6</b>	<b>Rating Average</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Amount of Growth	2	1	3	9	2	7	4.208333	24
Type of Growth (land use mix, density, etc.)	2	7	7	2	3	3	3.25	24
Location of Growth	8	5	5	2	1	3	2.666667	24
Adequacy of Infrastructure/Services	8	6	6	2	2	0	2.333333	24
Political Support for Growth Management Measures	0	4	3	4	7	6	4.333333	24
Citizen Support for Growth Management Measures	4	1	0	5	9	5	4.208333	24
<i>answered question</i>								<b>24</b>

*Note: A lower Rating Average indicates a more significant challenge.*

## Question #9: List your jurisdiction's top five growth management tools in order of importance.

Answer Options	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	Rating Average	Response Count
APFOs and Adequate Public Facility Tests	4	0	4	1	0	2.222222222	9
Capital Improvement Program	0	1	0	1	0	3	2
Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Areas Law	1	2	0	0	1	2.5	4
Comprehensive Plan (including regional and area plans)	9	5	0	1	1	1.75	16
Development Regulations (green buildings, moderate income housing, etc.)	0	0	2	0	0	3	2
Excise Tax or Impact Fees	0	0	2	0	1	3.666666667	3
GIS	0	0	0	0	1	5	1
Green Infrastructure Plan	0	1	0	0	0	2	1
Historical Consistency with Comprehensive Plan	0	1	0	0	0	2	1
Infrastructure Availability	0	0	1	1	0	3.5	2
Mandatory Clustering	0	0	0	0	1	5	1
Municipalities	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Land Preservation Programs (includes TDR and PDR programs)	1	2	1	5	2	3.454545455	11
Non-Tidal Wetlands	0	1	0	0	0	2	1
PFAs	0	0	2	0	0	3	2
Regional Cooperation (with municipalities, etc.)	0	1	2	0	1	3.25	4
Reservoir Protection Policies	0	0	0	1	0	4	1
Subdivision Ordinance or Regulations	0	1	2	2	1	3.5	6
State Support	0	0	0	0	1	5	1
Stormwater Management Regulations	0	0	0	0	1	5	1
Supportive and Well-Informed County Leadership	1	0	1	0	0	2	2
Town Center Concept	0	0	1	0	0	3	1
URDL	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Water and Sewer Master Plan	0	4	0	1	1	2.833333333	6
Zoning (including agricultural, high density mixed-use, overlay, transit, etc.)	6	4	3	4	0	2.294117647	17
answered question							24

*Note: A lower Rating Average, combined with a higher Response Count, indicates a more important growth management tool*

## Question #10: In your opinion, what important growth management tool(s) are missing from your jurisdiction or need strengthening?

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Additional Capacity in PFAs	4.2%	1
APFOs	4.2%	1
Comprehensive Plan	12.5%	3
Connection Between Approved Plans and CIP	4.2%	1
Countywide APFOs (i.e., APFOs that also apply in municipalities)	4.2%	1
Countywide MPDU Program	4.2%	1
Design Guidelines	4.2%	1
Education Outreach Tools	4.2%	1
Financing Tools (TIFs, etc.)	4.2%	1
Green Design Practices	4.2%	1
Impact Fees	4.2%	1
Joint Planning Agreements	4.2%	1
Land Preservation (Agricultural, Historical, Open Space, etc.)	8.3%	2
Linkage Between Growth Management Strategies and Environmental Regulations	4.2%	1
Mandatory Clustering in Sensitive Areas	4.2%	1
Mass Transit	4.2%	1
Mixed Use Zoning/Development (including incentives)	16.7%	4
Redevelopment and Revitalization (includes authority, incentives, land assembly, PUD regulations)	8.3%	2
Smart Codes	8.3%	2
Smart Growth Plan	4.2%	1
State Assistance for Needed Infrastructure	12.5%	3
Study of the "True Cost" of Development on the Environment, Roads, and Other Public Facilities	4.2%	1
Subdivision Regulations	4.2%	1
TDR Program	16.7%	4
Timing and Phasing Tools	4.2%	1
Water and Sewer Plan/Infrastructure	8.3%	2
Zoning	20.8%	5
<i>answered question</i>		<b>24</b>

**Question #11: Does your jurisdiction participate in regional planning efforts (*i.e.*, joint planning efforts with adjacent counties or municipalities, participation in a regional planning organization, etc.)?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	95.8%	23
No	4.2%	1
<i>answered question</i>		<b>24</b>

### ***Examples of Regional Planning Efforts***

- Participation in local regional planning and environmental studies (aquifer studies, transportation studies, etc.)
- farming, transportation, or tourism plans
- Regular meetings with planners or elected officials of municipalities, planners of adjacent counties, or planners of adjoining states (DE, PA, VA, WV) to form regional plans or strategies (general land use, agriculture, economic development, tourism, transportation, historic corridors, security corridors, etc.)
- Participation with MACo Planning Officials Affiliate at Statewide level or with NACo at the national level.
- Membership in Tri-County Councils, Council of Governments, BRAC Councils, or Regional or Metropolitan Councils.
- Partnerships with Heritage Councils and Land Conservancies.
- Joint planning with municipalities or adjacent counties on specific projects

## **Question #12: What additional regional planning efforts would assist your jurisdiction's growth management efforts and implementation of Smart Growth?**

### ***ANSWERED QUESTION: 16***

- Trying to find a way to better coordinate with adjoining state that have a different planning philosophy.
- Better coordination with adjoining State planning efforts.
- More regional planning of water, sewer and solid waste.
- Cooperation from MDE.
- Improved inter-county cooperation on transportation issues.
- Not sure what problems regional planning would address beyond the coordination already being done by existing organizations.
- Infrastructure coordination and GIS/data collection coordination.
- More cooperation with municipalities and agreements with adjacent counties concerning transportation issues.
- Expanding transportation choices through regional cooperation.
- Concurrency planning (letting the surrounding jurisdictions know when planning or capital projects are being undertaken)
- MDP providing planning assistance to smaller municipalities. A complete review and audit of the PFAs (how they are designated and the criteria and type of infrastructure that should be subject to PFA status). Fewer State mandates. Elimination of the "one-size fits all" approach of MDP. Need more flexibility based on the different geographic areas of the State.
- Coordinated transit plan for the Baltimore-Washington region. Collaborative watershed restoration (establish priorities and accelerate implementation of priority actions). Collaborative effort to educate citizens and elected officials regarding Smart Growth and sustainability issues.
- Inter-jurisdictional traffic congestion management.
- Inter-jurisdictional TDR cooperation for major subdivisions within municipal limits.
- Regularly organized meetings of planner departments.
- More voluntary meetings with surrounding counties and municipalities.



# SMART GROWTH ISSUES

**Question #13: How would you judge your jurisdiction's success at implementing Smart Growth? (Check one)**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Little or no progress	0.0%	0
Slight progress, but additional effort is needed	29.2%	7
Moderate progress, with further improvement possible	54.2%	13
Planning and growth completely based on Smart	16.7%	4
<i><b>answered question</b></i>		<b>24</b>

**Question #14: What are the major impediments to implementing Smart Growth in your jurisdiction? (Check all that apply)**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Smart Growth is an inappropriate objective for this	8.3%	2
Lack of staff or financial resources	37.5%	9
Lack of sewer capacity	66.7%	16
Lack of water capacity	41.7%	10
Lack of political will	33.3%	8
Citizen opposition	41.7%	10
"Legacy" Development	37.5%	9
Current Priority Funding Area Designations Inadequate	41.7%	10
Local land use codes and ordinances make	29.2%	7
Education of Elected Officials	45.8%	11
Education of Appointed Officials or Public Staff	25.0%	6
Education of Citizenry	62.5%	15
Education of Development Community	45.8%	11
Education of Other (specify below)	12.5%	3
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>24</b>

## **Additional Comments to Question #14**

- The banking community, buyers, and the citizens nearest to proposed developments need to be educated about Smart Growth.
- The parameters of Smart Growth do not take into consideration the impacts of second home or resort development pressures in certain jurisdictions. The expanded communities are evaluated based upon resident population projects and not what the visitor projected growth may be. Also, the market desire of second home owners is to escape higher density communities and to purchase a parcel of woods in the mountains. This attitude on density is a fundamental impediment to implementing Smart Growth in our jurisdiction.
- Legacy development, even if it would not be permitted under our county's current plans, policies, or regulations, is something that we have to work together to deal with and do the best we can.
- Education of all parties takes a lot of time. It is hard to get people who are busy with their lives to take time to understand and think about strategies for smarter growth. Other impediments to high density, compact mixed-use development include the developer marketed "American dream" of having a single family home with ample space, the high cost of housing close to job centers pulling home buyers to more affordable rural jurisdictions, and an auto-oriented culture with little support for mass transit.
- Legacy suburban land use patterns are a challenge to retrofit. Concentrated development can yield levels of traffic congestion that are unacceptable to nearby residents.

**Question #15: Do the current criteria for designating PFAs further Smart Growth principles? (Check one)**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	58.3%	14
No	41.7%	10
<i>answered question</i>		<b>24</b>

## Question #16: What changes should be made to the current PFA law?

### *Answered Question: 12*

- The PFAs should match county planned growth areas. Current law presumes that counties are not planning correctly when they set standards for growth areas.
- Counties should be able to make changes to PFAs, within reason, as areas of targeted development may change over time.
- The criteria used to establish PFA's for individual jurisdictions should be variable to accommodate the variety of circumstances and conditions affecting developmental pressures in that jurisdiction. Local jurisdictions should have the ability to designate appropriate growth areas based upon criteria tailored for that jurisdiction.
- Streamline the process for map amendments. Allow local jurisdictions to establish density criteria rather than the State.
- The PFA criteria should be revised, particularly in rural areas so that they match county growth areas that are suitable for growth and not just areas where existing infrastructure makes it possible to meet the criteria. Also, make it easier to extend community water and sewer in a logical growth extension.
- If PFAs are to be used as a growth management tool, they have to be redefined to match up to locally designated growth areas.
- There needs to be more emphasis on the linkage between the comprehensive plan and PFA designations. Too much emphasis is placed on density and water/sewer service areas. Comprehensive plans and water/sewer plans are amended regularly to reflect changing conditions but PFA designation is focused on conditions existing at a specific date and time.
- PFAs should recognize differences between rural, suburban, and urban jurisdictions which may mean different target densities and flexibility in establishing PFA boundaries (*i.e.*, using county growth areas instead of following sewer infrastructure).
- Finer designation for targeted growth areas and categories.
- PFAs do not work for rural jurisdictions.
- A complete audit/review of PFA criteria is needed. There are major disconnects in the PFA designations and the local implementation of sound planning principles and growth management strategies. Minor community enhancement projects (*i.e.*, sidewalks) may fall into the PFA abyss because the community is not within a PFA. A community that might have existed long before PFAs were created is no longer eligible for basic community enhancements through State programs because it is not a designated “growth area” (*i.e.*, an incorporated

## Question #17: To what extent do PFAs currently influence planning and decision making in your jurisdiction?

### *Answered Question: 24*

- The PFA designation is included in staff reports for infrastructure improvements, water and sewer category changes, etc. In short, it is a factor in the decision making process.
- Definite impact as developed and clearly noted in our comprehensive plan
- Limited influence.
- PFAs have a significant influence on our comprehensive plan preparation and have some influence on our daily decision-making process.
- PFAs have had a major influence in extending water and sewer.
- PFAs are targeted for growth but a lack of water/wastewater capacity limits their implementation.
- A fairly large extent – our comprehensive plan states our goal to focus most development in PFAs when possible.
- Influences us when considering areas for annexation or for projects with expected state funding.
- Influences us when determining State funding capabilities
- Very limited as PFAs are based on existing conditions at the time of their creation and do not always mesh with anticipated future conditions.
- In looking at changes in zoning, we are very aware of the requirements to maintain PFA status.
- Development approvals and planned infrastructure improvements are generally preferred in PFAs.
- None as all our major development occurs within our PFA/URDL.
- Since PFA is a State designation and concerns financing and not land use it generally does not influence our comprehensive planning.
- Helps to establish our fiscal policies regarding infrastructure improvements and helps in our growth management strategies.
- In some instances, PFAs force the county to permit building to proceed prior to having the infrastructure that would make it eligible for PFA status. My county wants infrastructure in place before development proceeds but PFAs do not always further that effort.
- The priority funding area boundaries are consistent with our land use planning efforts.
- None.
- The PFA is very important in terms of zoning and land-use policy. Funding of capital projects (schools, parks, etc.) does not as clearly reflect the intent to provide a lower level of service outside the PFA.
- None, as all of Baltimore City is a PFA.
- Major subdivisions are very difficult to have in the county now (50-unit cap in county).
- PFAs are not very important.

**Question #18: Does the existing State aid system encourage new growth to be located in PFAs while maintaining existing infrastructure needs in non-PFAs? (Check one)**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	45.8%	11
No	54.2%	13
<i>answered question</i>		<b>24</b>



## **Question #19: What changes should be made to the current State aid system?**

### ***Answered Question: 11***

- There is not enough money at this time to make a big difference. Also, the roads criteria for PFAs does not make sense.
- More State money.
- Decisions regarding State aid for certain programs or projects need to be re-evaluated so that funding is allowed for certain programs, even if the properties they affect are not in a designated PFA. For example, housing programs for first time homebuyers attempting to find affordable housing and low income housing rehab programs.
- Recognize that rural needs are different from urban needs. Historically, there has not been a distinct urban/rural boundary. There is very limited public transportation in rural areas.
- Create greater incentives to develop within PFAs.
- More exceptions for projects which improve water quality or eliminate failing septic systems.
- Fund the connection of existing on-site septic systems to public sewer systems in water quality sensitive locations.
- Not all types of projects should be subject to PFA review. For example, a house needing assistance is considered substandard regardless of whether it is in a PFA area.
- State aid should be dispersed in a less piecemeal fashion.
- There is inadequate infrastructure funding from the State in PFAs. The failure of Smart Growth is a lack of State funding.
- The current State Aid system is not strict enough.

# STATE PLANNING ISSUES

**Question #20: In your opinion, what is the appropriate role of the State in land use planning? (Check one)**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
State should have no role whatsoever	4.2%	1
State should provide advice and technical assistance to local	83.3%	20
State should exercise limited approval authority over local	12.5%	3
State should have extensive control over local comprehensive	0.0%	0
<i><b>answered question</b></i>		<b>24</b>

## **Additional Comments to Question #20**

- The State should promote general policy guidelines and the exchange of ideas between local and State agencies for policy implementation in specific jurisdictions. The notion of one policy applied Statewide does not work for all local jurisdictions.
- The State rarely understands the intricate balances of local planning. It also lacks the institutional background of negotiated decisions. Finally, the State wants to make “one size fits all” policies that can conveniently fit in a spreadsheet.
- The State should focus on the development of the Statewide Plan.
- The critical area program is a good example of a State-local partnership that has worked well in my county. The locals have superior knowledge of local conditions and objectives.
- MDP advice and assistance is helpful, especially in smaller jurisdictions with limited staff. However, MDP lacks the staff expertise and local knowledge to have authority to approve local comprehensive plans and land use decisions. It is appropriate for State legislation to further define the elements to be addressed in local comprehensive plans, perhaps with more specificity in terms of goals/expectations (such as regional or inter-jurisdictional dialogues on how to best coordinate growth policies and actions. The State could provide leadership and assistance in making the case for Smart Growth to the general public and elected officials. We are challenging market trends and citizens’ perceptions of their personal interests. MDP and the Governor's Smart Growth Subcabinet could team with MACO, MML, and the National Center for Smart Growth on an outreach/education campaign to make Smart Growth and sustainability understandable and compelling in terms of the average citizen.

**Question #21: Are State environmental laws and regulations, such as those governing water capacity or critical areas, properly integrated with Smart Growth principles?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	50.0%	12
No	50.0%	12
<i>answered question</i>		<b>24</b>

## Additional Comments to Question #21

- Various State departments do not always see the “big picture” and work against Smart Growth by giving differing comments and directions to counties.
- MDE needs to amend its onsite water and sewerage disposal regulations for clustering of home.
- Growth and smaller lots cannot occur in and around towns if there is insufficient sewer and water capacity. If funding is not available for infrastructure and economic development, it drives growth out in the countryside. There is a failure to see the larger picture as each State agency exercises its authority. State agency comment should be more organized, perhaps through a clearinghouse system and the State should work with the localities and not just be in the business of more permitting and more regulations.
- The State needs to reform its affordable housing initiatives. Also, there needs to be more cooperation between MDP and MDE. For example, the two departments must reconcile a jurisdiction’s PFAs with the lack of permitted capacity improvements (water/wastewater) to allow for growth to occur.
- In our county, the Groundwater Protection report results in an increase in the minimum lot size requirements for most newly-created subdivision lots. This sometimes runs contrary to clustering. Also, most of our critical area LDAs are located in parts of our county that are unsuited for additional development.
- Designated growth areas should be given more flexibility in complying with environmental regulations.
- More consideration should be made for rural jurisdictions where there are large undeveloped growth areas that may be adjacent to sensitive areas and it is difficult to extend services with existing critical area and other environmental restrictions.
- Urban stormwater runoff is a particular issue.
- Smart Growth for our county should mean accommodating more of our growth in higher density, compact mixed use development in the PFA. MDE's goals for improving water quality may pose two problems: (1) the State's stormwater management regulations favor lower intensity development that can accommodate overland flow and scattered surface BMPs, rather than underground stormwater management; and (2) TMDL restrictions may limit expansion of our wastewater treatment plant. If expansion is not permitted, new growth would either occur on well and septic, or be prohibited and thereby sprawl to neighboring jurisdictions.
- State laws need to be much stricter

## **Question #22: What kind of relationship should exist between the State Land Use Plan (required by statute but never implemented) and the State Transportation Plan, and local comprehensive plans, and local and regional plans (i.e., MPO) transportation plans?**

### ***Answered Question: 20***

- The State Land Use Plan should reflect the land use plans of the local jurisdictions. By building the composite plan, regional and State planning groups can work with local planning agencies to deal with issues related to conflicting local policies. Then refinements can occur. The State Transportation Plan should help create a transportation network to implement the State Land Use Plan.
- They should be integrated, but the local plans should dictate as they reflect the local situation.
- The State Land Use Plan should be assembled in a manner similar to the Transportation Improvement Plan – from the bottom up.
- The general policy should be one of consistency.
- The State Land Use Plan should reflect the balance between land use; transportation; and facilities that all plans are required to consider
- There should be a basic level consistency and coordination between all plans.
- Assumptions and methodology in forecasting and data collection should be consistent.
- The plans should match resource allocation with population location.
- They should be consistent and follow accepted principles such as those found in the Growth Act.
- Conflicts should be few and reconcilable.
- State plan should be reflective of local comprehensive plans. MPO should exercise its regional authority.
- There should be coordination between the State and local plans.
- The State Land Use Plan should serve as a guide to local jurisdictions but should not usurp local authority to govern our own use of land.
- State Transportation Plan should be a culmination of MPO Plans, especially for major construction projects and long-term transportation infrastructure and facilities. It should also provide an overview of alternative funding mechanisms.
- The State plans must be coordinated and integrated with each other and the local plans. There must also be funding integration.
- Ideally, the State would assemble the local comprehensive plans on a Statewide basis to identify shared Smart Growth policies that should be supported by the State Transportation Plan. The State Plan should also identify local plan conflicts that need to be resolved.
- There should be a very strong relationship.

**Question #23: Does the State provide adequate aid and technical assistance to help your jurisdiction comply with existing State land use and environmental laws?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	41.7%	10
No	58.3%	14
<i>answered question</i>		<b>24</b>



## Additional Comments to Question #23

- I think that the State is ahead of the public with respect to understanding Smart Growth issues. The State should help to sell the importance of concentrated development and environmental protection. I think that the State should also conduct more detailed studies of tidal waterways and the effectiveness of various pollution reduction tools. We rely heavily on the Bay Model.
- The State appears to be as understaffed as the local jurisdictions. At the local level, we do not have the expertise needed in a lot of areas and cannot get the funding for assistance. The State may have the expertise, but coordination and timing is an issue with our limited staffs.
- The local MDP offices should have more staff to help address local needs.
- This varies so much from agency to agency that it is impossible to answer. For example, DHCD is of assistance and provides help and training. The State used to offer training on land use to citizen planners and planning/board of appeals members. State staff is stretched so thin that they rarely have time to help, even if they have the inclination. Finding the correct person to talk to regarding problems is a concern. Contacts for specific issues should be provided and revised regularly.
- It is not a matter of providing aid. Staff at the State agencies are very capable and willing to assist us. The problem is the lack of clear, final decisions from management. We are often left to our own devices to come up with solutions for problems - only to be denied after an expenditure of resources and staff time - because of a lack of clear direction from the regulatory agencies having approval authority.
- The State's fingerprints are all over the county's land use regulations – critical areas, floodplain, building code, forest conservation act, etc. Our local critical area grant does not begin to cover these costs.
- The State does provide assistance, but it is minimal – mostly related to trying to understand the intent of State law.
- State requirements to prepare new or updated plans could be accompanied by the funding necessary to comply.
- The State should provide funding for planning and additional technical assistance. It could also provide/encourage better coordination among counties on land use and other plans.
- MDP and MDE are understaffed and overwhelmed by recent the legislative mandates (HB 1141 of 2006, HB 773 from 2007 Special Session, strengthening stormwater regulations, etc.), on top of existing functions. My county will need guidance on acceptable options for addressing HB 1141 when consultant studies are complete.
- State should be the entity pulling together the local jurisdictions on land use and environmental issues

## **Question #24: What new or modified State policies or actions would be most helpful to your jurisdiction's growth management and Smart Growth implementation efforts?**

### ***Answered Question: 20***

- Allow the local growth areas to serve as the PFAs.
- State funding for schools and roads in order that our APFO can work better as often State funding is needed to correct inadequacies in these areas because of State highways being involved and the way school construction is funded.
- When new planning mandates are created, financial assistance should be provided.
- Variable criteria for establishment of PFAs in specific jurisdictions based upon the unique conditions and circumstances of that jurisdiction.
- Modify permitting processes and increase response time for sewer and water infrastructure. Modify current PFA requirements and coordinate State agency reviews. Provide more educational outreach to local decision makers and citizens.
- Currently we need MDE and MDP to agree on capacity issues at local water/wastewater treatment plants. Increasing capacity will allow Smart Growth plans to be implemented in a timely fashion, reducing sprawling, low density development patterns beyond local growth boundaries.
- Flexibility to permit the local jurisdiction to modify their PFA boundaries.
- More communication and coordination.
- Policies for educating citizens, politicians, developers, and planners on good design, proper scale, and "Smart Growth."
- Base data should be more up to date.
- More funding for staff. Locally identified targeted growth areas.
- Increase funding to support expansion of municipal wastewater treatment capacity.
- Encourage all municipalities to have consistent APFOs with the Counties. No new planning mandates
- Provide additional transit funding.
- Increase funding for Smart Growth programs and projects.
- Provide public outreach/education regarding the desirability of Smart Growth. More State transportation funding, particularly for transit. Participation in a State-regional-local dialogue about how to direct more growth back to Baltimore City, how to accommodate a reasonable amount of growth in Central Maryland, and how to limit and selectively focus growth in the more rural parts of the State.
- Financing for infrastructure. Add more enforcement staff to MDE to effectively enforce existing environmental laws.
- Stricter laws on growth in green fields and stronger transportation planning. More money for transit.
- Change the critical area law.

# COUNTY GIS PROGRAMS

## Question #25: In which department is your county's GIS managed?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Do not have GIS	0.0%	0
Information Services	33.3%	8
Planning and Zoning	50.0%	12
Public Works	4.2%	1
Other (specify below)	12.5%	3
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>24</b>

### ***Additional Comments to Question #25***

- Was in planning, but moved to IT about an year and a half ago. In addition, now have GIS staff in various departments to maintain various layers.
- There is not centralized GIS. Planning and Zoning has managed a system for some time, however, funding from the numbering board established a separate system in Emergency Services. The County Roads Department has limited capabilities.
- We use MD property view with arc info. We do not have a full time person dedicated to GIS
- We have GIS in Planning and Zoning, Department of Public Works, and other other agencies. But the umbrella is in the IT Division.
- Department of Technology and Communications has the GIS lead, but Planning and Zoning is a heavy user and generator of GIS products.
- Mayor's Office of Information technology

**Question #26: Is your GIS available for use by other internal government units in your county?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	91.7%	22
No	8.3%	2
<i>answered question</i>		<b>24</b>

**Question #27: Is your GIS available to the public via the Internet?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	45.8%	11
No	54.2%	13
<i>answered question</i>		<b>24</b>

**Question #28: Do you have a parcel mapping program as part of your county's GIS?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	75.0%	18
No	25.0%	6
<i>answered question</i>		<b>24</b>

**Question #29: Are your parcels maintained as a closed parcel polygon map layer?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	94.7%	18
No	5.3%	1
<i>answered question</i>		<b>19</b>

## Question #30: How is your parcel map maintained?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
In-house	78.9%	15
Outside Contractor	0.0%	0
Not Maintained (specify date of last update)	21.1%	4
<i>answered question</i>		<b>19</b>

### *Additional Comments to Question #30*

- Last updated 2005.
- Maintained through Maryland Property View.
- Updated daily.
- Last updated 2006.
- Continuously updated.
- Recently developed with consultant, will be maintained in-house.
- Update cycle varies. We do not update all areas of the county at the same time – rapidly-growing areas are updated more often. There is always some updating activity going on.
- Department of Planning and Zoning is responsible for the parcel map layer that is used by all agencies.
- We just received parcel layer and plan on conducting maintenance in-house.

**Question #31: What is the frequency of the maintenance cycle for the parcel map layer?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Continuously	92.9%	13
Annually	7.1%	1
Other	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		<b>14</b>

**Question #32: How many full-time equivalent positions are required to maintain the parcel map layer?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1 to 5	92.9%	13
6 to 10	0.0%	0
11 to 20	7.1%	1
more than 20	0.0%	0
Other	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		<b>14</b>



**Question #33: What is the estimated annual cost to maintain the parcel map layer – including hardware, software, and support personnel?**

***Answered Question: 9***

- We receive our data from MDP.
- Our cost is for full time employee and an annually prorated cost for hardware and software.
- This is our first year of implementation and we do not have a fiscal estimate available yet.
- \$35,000
- \$50,000
- \$100,000
- \$150,000
- \$500,000
- \$1.7 million

### Question #34: Does your county plan to use GIS for planning purposes in the future?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	0.0%	0
No	100.0%	1
<i>answered question</i>		<b>1</b>

### Question #35: Does your county have plans to implement a parcel mapping program in its GIS?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes (specify below)	66.7%	4
No	33.3%	2
<i>answered question</i>		<b>6</b>

#### *Additional Comments to Question #35*

- The county does plan to implement parcel mapping in our CIP. However, the project does not have funding at this time.
- We are finishing are parcel mapping now and it should be available in six months.
- Our parcel data will be updated as MDP updates its data.
- Axis-Geospatial is working on implementation right now.

# FINAL THOUGHTS

## **Question #36: Is there anything else you feel is important for MACo to know concerning Smart Growth or land use issues?**

### ***Answered Question: 11***

- I am always concerned when land use decisions are made at a regional or state level. The local jurisdiction has a better understanding of the problems and consequences. Smart Growth tools will only succeed by public education.
- I am concerned that when one looks at our rural county it appears we have not been trying to comply with Smart Growth when in fact we have. Too much of the county is in parcels that have existed for a hundred years or more. If we look at recent history we find that the majority of new lots are created our growth areas and the county has down-zoned the rural areas to push development into the growth areas. Last year approximately 80% of new lots were within the growth areas. The other issue is that APFOs are forcing development into the rural areas as we do not have the infrastructure in roads and schools, and soon water and sewer, to sustain higher density development in the growth areas.
- Just re-emphasize that a unilateral policy does not necessarily fit all jurisdictions across the State, particularly with the physical, cultural and fiscal diversity that exists between jurisdictions within Maryland (especially between the urban and rural communities).
- In today's world, particularly in Central Maryland, it is easier to obtain permits for well and septic systems in rural areas than to obtain permits to expand treatment plant capacities for Smart Growth development patterns to proceed. State policies are achieving the plans opposite of what Smart Growth was intended to achieve.
- Agricultural issues for farming interests play a major role in any local decision making.
- Coordination on a Statewide level for implementing smart growth strategies, including a public education campaign, would be very helpful.

## Question #36 (continued)

### *Answered Question: 11*

- It is important that any new legislation or modification to existing laws accommodate the unique characteristics of jurisdictions, especially as it relates to rural versus urban settings.
- The State's insistence on using PFAs as the model for smart growth is not consistent with most rural county comprehensive plans.
- Let the counties do the work under the recent legislation that was passed (*i.e.*, HB 1141 of 2006) before making anymore wholesale changes. Those advocating for regional planning should clearly define desired outcomes, goals, and specific actions and roles. Statewide land use mandates should be carefully considered, as there is rarely a one-size fits all approach to Maryland counties with respect to land use and zoning. The State plans should be based on the county comprehensive plans.
- Education of local officials and the public to develop political will is critical.
- The importance of inter-jurisdictional cooperation cannot be overstated.

FIN